F
39
.H16

SAMUEL WHITNEY HALE

S. W. Hale

MEMORIAL

OF

SAMUEL WHITNEY HALE

KEENE, N. H.

Born	Died
APRIL 2, 1822	OCTOBER 16, 1891

By W. DELOSS LOVE, JR.

PRIVATELY PRINTED

HARTFORD, CONN.
Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company
1892

INSCRIBED

TO

His Living Grandchildren Beloved

AND TO

THE PRECIOUS MEMORY OF THOSE LITTLE ONES
DEPARTED WHOM HE CARRIES
IN HIS ARMS

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

"In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.

"For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded, for God proved them and found them worthy for Himself."

A WREATH of evergreen! It was hung over a familiar portrait at Christmas tide. Every one who looks upon it may read in the emblem a beautiful story of undying affection in her who placed it there. Yet now as the days go by the wreath is withering, its green is fading into the sear and sombre hue of time and the dried sprigs are falling. So in hope of twining one which will not so soon perish, and that those who come after us, when they look upon his face, may know him as he was known in his family circle, we make this record of his life.

Samuel Whitney Hale was born April 2, 1822, in the home of his father, Samuel Hale, which was situated on a beautiful hillside overlooking the thriving town of Fitchburg, Mass. His mother was Saloma Whitney, born in Westminster, Mass., January 10, 1792, where her father, Samuel Whitney, Jr., resided. Thus on both the paternal and maternal sides he was of a worthy ancestry, the Hales and the Whitneys having been conspicuous from earliest times in New England history. The line of his father's descent is: Samuel Hale, Moses Hale of Fitchburg, Moses Hale of Newbury, Rev. Moses Hale of Byfield, John Hale of Newbury, Thomas Hale of Newbury and Watton, Hertfordshire, England. The line of

his mother's descent is: Saloma Whitney, Samuel Whitney, Jr., of Westminster, Samuel Whitney of Westminster, William Whitney of Weston, Nathaniel Whitney of Watertown, John Whitney, Jr., of Watertown, John Whitney of Watertown and Isleworth, England. These ancestors were joined in marriage to well-known Massachusetts families as the following names testify: Smith, Huse, Moody, Symonds; and Wilder, Fletcher, Pierce, Hagar, Reynolds.

So the babe born in the hillside home had a title by the laws of heredity to the New England character, the virtues of which have been a great element of success in so many lives. His grandfather, Moses Hale, had been reared under the strictest religious influences, which had emanated from the instruction of an honored New England minister of the olden time. Moses Hale carried those influences with him when he removed from Newbury about 1786 and established himself on a Fitchburg farm, where his son Samuel was born October 20, 1792. This son followed his father's vocation; and the homestead farm where Samuel Hale and Saloma Whitney spent their days,—passing thence to their reward in 1880, he on the 1st of February, and she on the 25th of June—was throughout his life a dearly-loved spot to their son. He ever recognized the fact that he owed much to the religious atmosphere of his father's house, though it seemed somewhat oppressive to his spirits in boyhood. Often in his maturer years, when weighed down with business cares and harassed by responsibili-

ties, he turned aside for a while to breathe the invigorating air of that hill and delight in its extensive view. Thither his children often went to enjoy the partiality of their grandparents and the maiden aunt, Mary Elizabeth Hale, whose devoted life was a blessing to all who came under her influence and came to a close all too soon, June 30, 1879. We have walked with him around the familiar premises and marked the reverence he had for the old home and the lessons of his childhood. Words of counsel which his parents had given were repeated. In a vein of commingled tenderness and merriment, scenes were revived in which his boyish love for fun had offended the discipline of the Puritan household. He remembered with exceptional clearness the details of his early days on the farm,—how he had held the plough in the field for the first time, had driven the herd to pasture by such a path, had been diverted from his play in the dooryard to watch his mother feeding the chickens, had occupied such a seat in the old schoolhouse in the valley, and had received the great truths of morality and religion in line upon line about the fireside. Reminiscences of this past were pleasant to hear from his lips, not only because of his own inimitable recital of them, but also because they seemed to afford him so much pleasure in the recollection. So the streams of influence from his childhood went singing through his life.

In those years of his youth Samuel Whitney Hale obtained such instruction as the schools of the town afforded. These advantages were not great, and as he

grew he realized more the necessity of exerting himself in acquiring an education. He had not been gifted with that power of application which makes a student; but he had an intuitive faculty of gathering facts and apprehending situations which is often a means of developing men in the affairs of life more than the schools. He had been taught to work and had learned what work can accomplish, though he had no particular fondness for the routine of farm labor. Withal he had a restless disposition which could not be satisfied with the quiet environment of the agriculturist, but must be in the midst of the world's business. It was altogether natural to him to trade. As he grew to maturity therefore an ambition awakened within him to find a larger sphere of activity where he might hope to see his aims realized.

Shortly after he became of age he left his father's house to take up his residence in Dublin, N. H., where he engaged in business with his elder brother, John Moses Hale. There his labors were prospered. He extended his interests and entered into manufacturing. It could not be expected that this rural town on the shoulder of Mount Monadnock would long continue to be his home. It was so until 1859 when he removed to Keene, N. H., the center of manufacturing and business interests in Cheshire County. The affection Mr. Hale had for Dublin and his interest in its people were the growth of those years. He made acquaintances in the village store and in the church, and these he ever remembered. Indeed, this was one prominent characteristic in his kindly

nature; he loved to meet his old friends and never missed an opportunity of inquiring after them. The warm attachment many had for him throughout his life grew in part out of this genuine interest he had in them. Their faces were known to him at once though he had not seen them perhaps for years, and he could speak their names without hesitation. Throughout his political life this faculty won him popularity, and all the more because it was evidently a natural trait in the man. In traveling with him we have often noted his greeting of one whom he had known years before. It seemed to bring a flock of recollections to his mind and he could give a biography of his old friend enlivened with many incidents — a story told in such friendliness that the absent one would have been pleased to hear it.

While residing in Dublin Mr. Hale founded his home. He was married by Rev. Levi W. Leonard, D.D., June 13, 1850, to Emelia Marinda Hay, who was born in Dublin November 9, 1832, a daughter of Joseph Fitch and Nancy Saunders Hay. This family were early settlers in the town, to which Joseph's father, Thomas Hay, Jr., had come from Merrimack, N. H., where Thomas Hay, the son of William Hay, M.D., of Reading, Mass., had been an original settler. The son-in-law was welcomed into this family circle, and in an adjoining house his two children were born, William Samuel, May 17, 1854, and Mary Louise, August 26, 1855. Here it is pleasant to record the esteem he ever had for Mr. and Mrs. Hay, who spent their declining years amid the comforts of his home at

Keene,— the father a gentleman of the old school and the mother devoted to the kind offices of the household. Respect for the aged was characteristic of him, but in his relations to her whom he lovingly knew as "grandmother," surviving her husband as she did many years, there was filial love which his family can never forget. On formal occasions it was she who was escorted on his arm to the table. By many attentions and a tender solicitude for her comfort she was made to feel that she was welcome in the home where she dwelt. She, too, reciprocated this kindness, and as a mother was faithful to him, mourning his death in her age.

The religious nature of Mr. Hale was developed in early life. His parents had been connected with a Congregational church, but he came under the more ardent religious teachings of the Methodists and united with a Methodist church. It was easy for those who knew him well to account for this affiliation. He had a strong emotional temperament and was oftentimes borne along by the rising tide of his feelings. He was enthusiastic in whatever engaged his mind, and religion was no exception. So it happened that he came under revivalistic influences, experiencing great good himself in such seasons and believing thoroughly in that means of awakening fervor in a church. The Unitarian teachings under which many of his friends sat in Dublin, and which he never spoke harshly of, did not effect a change in his opinions. Even after his removal to Keene, when he and his companion united with the First Congrega-

tional Church then under the pastoral care of Rev. Z. S. Barstow, D.D., the characteristic of religious earnestness dominated his thought. It was doubtless one reason why he joined with others in 1867 to form the Second Congregational Church.

Mr. Hale's business connections were extensive and various. It does not fall within our purpose to give a particular account of them, but any sketch of his life would be incomplete without some notice of his exceptional capacities, the very scope of which involved him in overwhelming responsibilities. The ability to watch over the exacting details of an enterprise, so essential to its permanent success, is seldom found in the man who conceives it and can push it with enthusiasm. Of Mr. Hale it can be said as of few, he had marvelous energy and indomitable perseverance. He accomplished through his zeal what others would have given up as impossible. Such a disposition is ever liable to make extravagant estimates and cannot be governed by a calm conservatism. It takes many things on the assurances of others and must leave to them the working of the machinery. Its mission is to furnish the motive force, to carry a venture forward with enterprise. In all the business relations of Mr. Hale this seems to have been the part which fell to him, and his success was largely due to this extraordinary capacity. Any one of the numerous companies in which he was interested was sufficient to claim all the attention of an energetic man. He believed in them and served them as well as he could. His labors

were greatly augmented by his desire to protect others who had adventured with him. Yet he thought he had time and strength for more and expanded his interests. The wheels of fortune, however, turn continuously for but few in this world, and there is a limit in our human capacity to tend them. It was through no abating of his efforts that their product decreased. He bore disappointment with a brave heart — its deepest bitterness himself, blaming not others, shielding not his own, courageous and hopeful in his expectations until that tireless energy, which was a wonder to all who knew him, fell asleep.

The political career of Mr. Hale affords to one who was intimately acquainted with it a pleasing view of his manhood. In his youth he sympathized with the Free-soil party, and for its candidate he cast his first vote. At its organization he joined the Republican party. No one surely ever entertained a suspicion that he was half-hearted in his political faith. It was characteristic of him to be both loyal and enthusiastic. Having become a supporter of the candidacy of Hon. James G. Blaine he never wavered, and many are the admiring remarks he has been heard to make of that great political leader even after his chances of success had waned. He valued party triumphs, perhaps more than some would, but in this he was consistent with his belief that a Republican administration was best qualified to serve the people. As he became more and more familiar with politics, he was drawn into them. In 1866 he was elected to the State Legislature, and was reëlected the year following. For two years he

was chosen a member of the Governor's Council. Then, in the autumn of 1882, came an exciting canvass which resulted in his being the Republican nominee for Governor of the State. It was a season of general disaster to his party throughout the country, but he was elected, and on the 7th of June, 1883, was inaugurated at Concord. This success, however much of honor he may have seen in it, was but the background upon which his friends were enabled to see certain noble traits in his character. His conduct during the ordeal of political conflict was admirable. It was said of him at the time in a newspaper: "Any one who has been thrown into personal contact with Mr. Hale cannot fail to have become impressed with that gentleman's eminently proper and dignified bearing. If he has even once yielded to the temptation to indulge in vehement expression or angry retort, we have yet to learn of it." In his family, where many would have felt less restraint, he was never heard to speak unkindly of his political opponents. Indeed, though he was not at other times insensible of unjust or unfriendly treatment, he readily found excuse for the utterances of an exciting campaign. He read them all, particularly those judgments which were adverse, — read them with amusement, and welcomed the suggestion that they be preserved in a scrap-book for his entertainment. And, though we note this trait in connection with his political career, it was always and everywhere true of him that he never harbored enmity. He taught his family by example to forgive. Though he did not hesitate to disagree with

others, he was able to appreciate their situation. He recognized the good qualities in others, and praised many behind their backs who had no reason to expect such words. A friend truly wrote of him : " I have always noticed that he never said harsh or unkind things of anyone." In this he has left behind him a memory that is blessed.

Governor Hale discharged the duties of his high office with credit to himself and honor to the State. His executive ability was unquestioned. The legislation which came before him was conscientiously and thoroughly considered, and his action received the commendation of his fellow-citizens. He was a patriot in every sense of the word. The interests of the people which had been committed to his care were foremost in his mind. Great pressure was brought to bear upon him to exercise his power of veto. He could have done so with reasons which would have seemed sufficient to many, and his action would have been of life-long benefit to himself in circumstances which conspired against him, but he did not hesitate for one moment to choose that course which he thought was for the welfare of the State. He made such appointments as the dignity of the office at his disposal demanded, even at the risk of experiencing the resentment of some who had been his personal friends. The consequences were never so great that he regretted in after times his decision. His pastor spake of him as follows: " Amid the whirlpools, pitfalls, and quicksands of political life, so universally fatal to the strongest, he moved with conscience and integrity unimpaired. His attitude and

conduct in public life made a deep and salutary impression upon his immediate associates, especially upon the members of his Council and Staff: while Governor with one accord they bear hearty witness to his thoroughly Christian and manly conduct and action when principle was at stake."

This opinion of him was given in the public press: "Governor Hale's administration was clean and successful in every way, and was characterized by several new and important measures which were adopted by the Legislature and received the Governor's support and sanction. He filled the office of Chief Executive of the State with marked ability, firmness, and dignity, proving one of the best and ablest governors which New Hampshire has had for years. No flaws or shortcomings were ever found in his gubernatorial career, even by his political opponents and enemies."

Those who had even a slight acquaintance with Mr. Hale will agree that one of his conspicuous traits was his kindness of heart. This was manifest throughout his life in his relations to employees, among his relatives and friends, in his church fellowship, and in his home. None ever appealed to him for help and were denied when the relief was within his power. The enduring attachment many had for him, especially among the poor and such as had been sick or unfortunate, was in numerous instances due to some unheralded kindness which they had received at his hand. It was not possible for him to be miserly and close with what he had to bestow. So easy was it to

obtain a favor from him that he was constantly appealed to in person and by letter. He released many from their obligations to him when others would have pressed the claims. With what pleasure did he send his carriage on the Sabbath to carry this or that infirm person to the house of God! The grapes in his hothouse, which ripened while yet the winter's snow lingered, were not too costly for the invalid, and were sometimes sent to those whom he had never even seen. Strange it was, and still it was true, he would listen more attentively to the recital of another's trouble than to the discussion of matters which most men would have thought of greater moment. His sympathies were easily aroused, and he usually found some practical way of expressing them.

Thus by the exhibition of his desire to see others happy, he wrought his life into the hearts of many about him. This was preëminently true in his home. Among his servants he was popular. They did his bidding with something of pleasure. Though he was absent from his home much of the time on business, he delighted to think that those whom he had left there were enjoying its pleasures. Their friends were his also. They came, and were welcomed. They went away, and felt that it would be pleasant to come again. His hospitality was without grudging. On many occasions he entertained lecturers, and when there was a religious gathering his house was sure to be filled with guests. He always had a room in his mansion for any who might turn aside from the thronged pathway to rest awhile. One who had

a remembrance of his hospitality has written of it thus: "I once saw him in his own lovely home, surrounded by his accomplished family. I was quite sick at the time, but the kind attentions of all kept heart in me, and I have never forgotten their courtesies to the stranger." The intimation of these words is just, for wife, son, and daughter were in cordial sympathy with such services; but they would accord to the head of the household the honor of being the personal inspiration of these loving deeds.

Throughout the forty years of Mr. Hale's married life he displayed a constancy of affection toward her whom he had chosen, which can only be recalled by his children with tenderest emotion. As the bower over which the honeysuckle clambers is filled with fragance, so was his home with love. No whispered word ever brought a reproach against the purity of his life. He was, too, a generous father, indulging his children in all that could contribute to their happiness. The words of admonition or counsel he uttered were few, but wisely chosen, and the respect his children had for his wishes made them sufficient. From their infancy his grandchildren were drawn toward him, seeming to know by instinct his tender feelings. When he was away from them their names were often on his lips, and in their presence he entered into all their childish joys. So he showed his love for all children wherever he met them. On one occasion he brought a beautiful child home with him, and she tarried in his family for years — a joy and sunbeam in the

household. We have seen him at a railroad station, while waiting for a train, take a crying babe from the mother, wholly unknown to him, and carry it in his arms, which was surely an unusual service for the Governor of a commonwealth. This same tenderness was often seen in the homes of his children. There are those who will never forget the sound of his anxious footsteps to and fro through many hours of the night of watching. The flight of that child's spirit was his loss, too; his tearful eyes and voice melted with sorrow told how great a loss. As time goes on all remembrance of him may fade from the mind of even the eldest of his grandchildren, except as these lines may, perhaps, freshen it; but there were days when they watched at the window for his coming, with expectations of a greeting from "grandpa" — the best of their friends.

In the memorial discourse preached shortly after his death by Rev. G. H. DeBevoise, his pastor, the following eloquent tribute was paid to Mr. Hale's home life: "He lavished the love and tenderness of his pure and loving heart without stint or measure upon wife and children. All that true devotion to their happiness and good could do was ever done for them. From the distractions of business, from the whirl of politics, he retired to his home as to a sanctuary, and he strove to keep himself sweet and pure through home influences and through prayer. Not only when the waters went over him did he pray, but also when through calm, unruffled seas he was making progress toward the city that hath founda-

tions, whose builder and maker is God. In his children's children he had great delight and joy. They are not old enough to know or recollect much about him. But they will be told of his love for them, and of a life not perfect, but one which amid the strife of tongues, the war of words, the harassing cares of business, the burdens, temptations, and trials of high political station, steadily held to truth, integrity, to love of men, and to God."

The personal appearance of Mr. Hale was such that he was a marked man wherever he went. In stature he was above the average height, his form was erect, and he walked with a firm step. The charm of his countenance was in his pleasant smile, which could be detected in his twinkling eye before it appeared on his face. His coal-black hair conveyed to strangers the impression that he was younger than his years. Persons who met him noted his genial manner, which was warmed by the gentleness of his speech. Few men are more companionable than he was. On all subjects he was well-informed, and his conversation was sure to be enlivened by some story which came to his mind from some mysterious depth, for, though often with him, we have rarely heard him repeat himself. If he lacked in being able to read the characters of other men, it was singularly true that other men could easily detect his kindly disposition in his face. One day, when he was riding in a train, a man entered the car, and after passing through it, eyeing every passenger narrowly, he came to Mr. Hale, and asked for fifty cents to pay his fare. It was paid at once, and the

stranger bluntly told his benefactor that he knew by his face that he would not be refused.

No one will deny that Mr. Hale had great courage and pluck. The business reverses which came upon him in his last years would have conquered most men. His desire to recover himself urged him on to exertions which, if unwisely judged and of unfortunate issue, had at least in his mind the merit of an honorable intention. The physical man cannot endure all that such a brave spirit puts upon it, and in his case death brought him a release. A gentleman distinguished in the public life of the State expressed his opinion in these words: "I think Governor Hale was one of the noblest and ablest men I have known. The really great things which he accomplished by his pluck and bravery and intelligence and business capacity, and the sturdy manhood with which he encountered the misfortunes of life and battled with them to the last, when weak and small men would have laid down in despair, entitle him to be honored and remembered as one of our most superior men."

In his devotion to the interests of the Second Congregational Church of Keene, with which Mr. Hale was connected for nearly twenty-five years, he set a commendable example. He gave generously to build its house of worship and for many years thereafter he was a pillar of strength in its fellowship. The preacher of the Gospel had his full and hearty encouragement in his work. He felt that he was not fitted to teach, yet he

nevertheless tried to do his part in the teaching of the Sabbath-school. His contributions to the various necessities of the church, whether he was called upon to make up a deficit, repair the meeting-house, or bury the dead, were all cheerfully given, perhaps the most so of any benefactions he made, though he was much interested in missions, for he had a large conception of the necessity of established religious influences and believed in the fellowship of Christians in the church of Christ. He would fain have had his last days contribute to the honor and usefulness of the church he loved; if it was otherwise the greater grief was his. Under no circumstances in his intercourse with men, — who are always influenced by confessions of faith however far short our human nature may come of abiding by them — did he hesitate to avow his allegiance to Christ. He was never ashamed of the blessed Redeemer.

An honored member of his gubernatorial staff bears this testimony concerning him: "Governor Hale was one to whom by long acquaintance I had become very much attached, and had learned to love. In all of my business relations of more than thirty-five years I never had to do with one more noble and upright. Socially he was always gentlemanly and courteous, ever extending the hand of welcome, expressive of a warm and generous heart. In fact, he was this to every one, however humble their position in life.

"He was always loyal to his religious obligation, ready at all times to do his duty though the cross be

heavy; and I well remember many years ago when he was State Councilor of his frequent attendance at the men's morning prayer-meeting, held in a hall near the council chamber. His remarks were listened to with the closest attention, his prayer was earnest, and his influence always on the side of religion and Christian benevolence, as many poor persons can testify. His heart and purse were always open to them for sympathy and help, and he was ever ready to aid in sending the gospel to those who have it not.

"In later years, when going through the political strife of a gubernatorial campaign, my attachment grew stronger, and after his election, receiving an appointment on his staff, I had an opportunity to see more of the real man than ever before, as my relations with him were more close and intimate. I have been with him on many pleasant occasions, when thousands turned their eyes to witness his approach; also when dark clouds hung low, when various influences and threats were used for a purpose, but, like the man that he was, he claimed a right to think and act for himself — ever governed by the principle of justice and right, and with fidelity did he do his duty to his God, himself, and the State. As its chief executive, no one, not even his political opponents, could say aught of his administration.

"From the generous impulse of his heart he spoke no unkind word of anyone, but always threw the mantle of charity over all, whether friend or otherwise. I believe him to have been a noble Christian man, and I shall ever cherish his memory and think of him as such."

That Mr. Hale made a similar impression of his Christian character upon his business associates the following words from one of them bear witness:

"Of course all who knew him well recognized the splendid attributes of his good nature. Generous, amiable, gentle, keenly alive to his moral, religious, and social obligations, he faithfully discharged his whole duty to the State, community, his family, friends, and his God.

"From him I have had repeated evidences of his abiding faith in the Redeemer of mankind, his absolute loyalty to our common religion and his hope in immortality. He certainly could have had no fear of Death.

"Let us think of him as we knew him in the prime of his manly vigor, when 'his eye was not dimmed nor his native force abated.' Let us be consoled with the belief that his generous soul rests in peace; and that he has gone to 'his chamber in the silent halls of death,' sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, and 'like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him he lay down to pleasant dreams.'

"He was a manly man. Nature had endowed him with a generous hand. His mental and physical powers were liberally bestowed upon him, and in all respects he was a gentleman. 'His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world: This was a man.'"

Samuel Whitney Hale died at the home of his beloved elder brother, John M. Hale, 361 Monroe Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., October 16, 1891. He had been far from well for

some time, but with characteristic fortitude he concealed so far as possible his condition from his family, though its hopelessness was made known to him by his physician about a week before his death. Nature was merciful in permitting him to pursue his labors until within ten days of that time. What his thoughts were in bidding farewell to that business world where he had been long so active these lines will testify:

"A week before his death he spent some time in my office, and he seemed cheerful and usually well, but said he felt weak, but thought he was gaining steadily. He was anxious to carry forward some business he had just entered into. He spoke of some acquaintances that had died suddenly. He said any of us might die in the same manner, but that would be all right if we were ready. He spoke with confidence of the future life, and had no fears. He said if he could have his choice it would be not to have a lingering sickness that would be a tax on those left. He seemed to think more of this — to leave those whom he had so long loved and cared for, as they for him, behind; but he knew he should meet them again."

So he passed away. Everything which brotherly kindness could suggest and the skilled attentions of a sister beloved could devise, ministered to the relief of his fleeting hours. Comforted by the Christian faith and hope of her who had been the devoted companion of his life, and cheered by the words of his son upon whom he had leaned, he fell asleep in the gray dawn of the morning, — the shadows fled away and the day broke! His

remains were sorrowfully carried to his home, so pleasant and happy in other days by his presence, where on the 19th of October the funeral obsequies were held. Dust was committed to dust, as is the final lot of all that is mortal; the spirit had gone to God who gave it.

Men seem betimes in the eyes of a vain world to die great; but in the Lamb's book of life, from which no record of our past fades away though by men forgotten, there is no such rating. Through the gift of divine mercy the most the best of us can hope for is to die forgiven.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 041 420 7